

United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

Nevada State Office
P.O. Box 12000
Reno, Nevada 89520-0006

IN REPLY REFER TO:
6300/1610 (NV-930) P

October 17, 2003

EMS TRANSMISSION 10/20/03

Instruction Memorandum No. NV-2004-003

Expires: 9/30/2005

To: Field Managers, Nevada
Field Managers, Eagle Lake and Surprise Field Offices, California

From: State Director, Nevada

Subject: Implementation of Utah v. Norton Settlement Regarding Wilderness Study Areas and
Consideration of Wilderness Characteristics in Land Use Plans

Attached for your implementation is Washington Office (WO) Instruction Memorandum (IM) No. 2003-274 (Attachment 1) relating to implementation of the Utah v. Norton settlement concerning Wilderness Study Areas (WSAs), and WO IM No. 2003-275 (Attachment 2) pertaining to consideration of wilderness characteristics in land use plans.

IM No. 2003-274 is not as relevant to Nevada as it is to other BLM states that designated WSAs under the authority of Section 202 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 after October 21, 1993. Nevada has no such WSAs identified or designated through existing land use plans. The Nevada BLM may, however, continue to inventory public lands for wilderness characteristics, as part of managing the public lands and in support of land use planning.

IM No. 2003-275 states that BLM may consider information on wilderness characteristics when preparing land use plans and that wilderness characteristics may be managed to protect and/or preserve some or all of those characteristics. Land use plan decisions to protect wilderness characteristics may include: 1) establishing visual resource management class objectives, 2) attaching conditions of use to permits, leases, and other authorizations, 3) designating lands as open, closed, or limited to off-highway vehicles, and 4) designating Areas of Critical Environmental Concern.

BLM is authorized to consider resource information contained in BLM wilderness inventories and public wilderness proposals during preparation of a land use plan amendment or revision. This information may be used in a variety of day-to-day operations including, but not limited to: 1) applying new

mitigation measures to on-the-ground projects, 2) establishing reclamation

2

standards, 3) updating the BLM's resource data bases, 4) refining previously approved plan decisions (plan maintenance), 5) implementing decisions in land use plans, and 6) when preparing National Environmental Policy Act documents for actions that implement the approved plan.

The Wilderness Inventory and Study Procedures Handbook (H-6310-1) was rescinded in Washington Office IM 2003-195, dated June 20, 2003. Consequently, Nevada Information Bulletin No. NV-2002-059, dated March 27, 2002, and entitled, "Wilderness Inventory and Study Procedures Handbook, H-6310-1" is hereby rescinded by this instruction memorandum.

If you have questions regarding this instruction memorandum or the two attachments, please contact Steve Smith (775-861-6477) or Brian Amme (775-861-6645) in the State Office.

Signed by:
Robert V. Abbey
State Director, Nevada

Authenticated by:
Florence Kopec
Staff Assistant

2 Attachments

1. WO IM No. 2003-274, dtd. 9/29/03 (3 pp)
2. WO IM No. 2003-275, dtd. 9/29/03 (9 pp)

Distribution

Director (170)
Director (172)
Director (210)
SD, Colorado (Attn: David Porter)